

Article - Natural Resources

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§10–607.

(a) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, this section shall apply only to owners of riparian property in Maryland regardless of the residency of the owner.

(2) Under this subtitle, persons owning riparian property in:

(i) Maryland or Virginia that is adjacent to the tidal waters of the Potomac River may license state shoreline; and

(ii) Maryland, Virginia, or West Virginia that is adjacent to the nontidal waters of the Potomac River:

1. May license state island shoreline; and

2. May not license state mainland shoreline.

(b) Riparian landowners may license their riparian shoreline:

(1) To establish offshore stationary blinds or blind sites for hunting wild waterfowl; and

(2) To prevent other persons from licensing the riparian shoreline for the purpose of hunting wild waterfowl offshore.

(c) (1) On the nontidal waters of the Potomac River, Conococheague Creek, and the Monocacy River, the Department may not license riparian shoreline owned by a federal or State unit or the assignee of the federal or State unit.

(2) (i) A federal or State unit that owns riparian shoreline on the nontidal waters of the Potomac River, Conococheague Creek, and the Monocacy River may apply to the Department to establish a waterfowl safety zone in a specified area of the shoreline.

(ii) The Secretary shall review each request and determine whether sufficient need for a waterfowl safety zone exists.

(3) On or before August 15 of each year, the Department shall mark each waterfowl safety zone with clearly visible signs.

(d) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, only persons that own at least 250 yards of continuous shoreline, or persons that have the written consent of adjoining landowners to achieve the required 250 yards of continuous shoreline, may erect an offshore stationary blind or blind site.

(2) A riparian landowner who owns less than 250 yards of continuous shoreline may establish an offshore blind site if no other shoreline is licensed within 125 yards of the blind site.

(e) Riparian landowners may lease or assign their rights to license their riparian shoreline.

(f) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) of this subsection, riparian landowners may not locate an offshore stationary blind or blind site within 125 yards of the property line or where the line would be if it were extended out over the water perpendicular to the shore at the point where the property line reaches the water's edge.

(2) A riparian landowner who owns less than 250 yards of continuous shoreline may not locate an offshore blind site closer than 125 yards from the nearest licensed shoreline.

(g) Notwithstanding the other provisions of this section, where circumstances require, such as in coves and when two properties extend onto a point of land, the Secretary may determine where an offshore stationary blind or blind site license shall be located. The Secretary shall try to locate the sites so that each riparian landowner gets a site and may locate the blinds closer than 250 yards apart with the written consent of the two riparian landowners.

(h) (1) Riparian landowners, including government agencies, shall license their shoreline either annually or every 3 years in accordance with this section.

(2) An applicant for a license shall:

(i) Submit to the Department:

1. An application by mail prior to June 1 of the year in which the current license expires or for which a new license is requested on a form provided by the Department;

2. A map showing the exact location of the shoreline to be licensed and the exact location of the proposed offshore stationary blinds or blind sites, if any;

3. The written permission of adjacent landowners if necessary; and

4. The written lease or assignment of the riparian landowner if necessary; and

(ii) Pay to the Department a fee of:

1. \$20 for a 1-year license; or

2. \$60 for a 3-year license.

(3) A unit of government is exempt from the application fee required under paragraph (2) of this subsection.

(i) (1) At least 3 months before a license expires on June 30, the Department shall mail a renewal notice and a renewal application to all riparian landowners holding licenses subject to expiration.

(2) The renewal notice shall state:

(i) The date on which the current license expires;

(ii) The date by which the Department must receive the renewal application for the renewal to be issued and mailed before the license expires; and

(iii) The amount of the renewal fee.

(j) Before June 1st of the year the license expires, the licensee may renew the license for an additional 1-year or 3-year term, if the licensee:

(1) Is otherwise entitled to be licensed;

(2) Pays to the Department a renewal fee of:

(i) \$20 for a 1-year license; or

(ii) \$60 for a 3-year license; and

(3) Submits to the Department a renewal application on the form that the Department requires.

(k) (1) All applications to license riparian shoreline shall be approved by the Department in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

(2) Whenever conflicts occur between applicants wishing to establish offshore stationary blinds or blind sites and those conflicts cannot be resolved by application of subsection (g) of this section, the applicant applying first shall prevail. If both applications arrive in the mail on the same day a coin toss shall determine which applicant shall prevail. The applicants may be present for the coin toss.

(l) Funds collected under this section shall be used to administer the licensing program under this section. Any funds not expended in a fiscal year for administering the licensing program under this section may not be transferred or revert to the General Fund of the State, but shall be credited to the State Wildlife Management and Protection Fund.

(m) A riparian landowner who fails to meet the June 1 deadline for license application may license shoreline and establish a stationary blind or blind site for a 1-year period during the licensing process described in § 10-608(b) through (h) of this subtitle.

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